

## APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

### Meeting Minutes

**For the Meeting Held On** April 7, 2015

**Meeting Time :** 6:30 pm

**Location :** Council on Aging Conference Room – 328 N. Main St. East Longmeadow, MA

**Meeting Posted On:** **Day:** Wednesday **Date:** 3 / 11 / 2015

(48 hrs required)

**Is Meeting Being Recorded by Digital Recorder:** Yes ☒ No ☐

**The Minutes of this Meeting are being taken by:** Marge Larocca

**Committee Members:** (check if attended)

Eric Madison	✓	Russell Denver	✓	James Broderick	✓	James Walsh	✓
Dawn Starks	✓	Rocco Carabetta	✓	Sam Pizzanelli	✓	Sara Menard	✓

Attendees: James Donohue, Nick Breault, James Sheils, Marge Larocca

**Did the Chair release any prior Executive Session Minutes?**

**Dates of Executive Session Released :**

Yes		No	x
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## TOPIC / MATTER #1

### Health Insurance Warrant Articles

#### Summary of Matter Discussed :

- The Chairman opened the meeting. Attorney Donohue, Town Counsel gave a description of the three options of the Warrant Article for Elected Officials Health Insurance. Discussion followed about current part-time retired elected officials, and scenarios of the three options.
- Town Counsel was asked about the citizen petitioned article #28 pertaining to freezing tax rates. He responded that as the article is written, Town Meeting doesn't have the authority to amend the rules and regulations of the Board of Selectmen.
- The Board of Selectmen had sent a request to the Appropriations Committee asking for a recommendation for one of the three warrant options. The Chairman stated that the Committee would favor option A of the warrant article, but would lend support to any of the three options.

#### Documents or Exhibits for this Matter:

- None

#### Votes Taken Under this Matter :

- None

## **TOPIC / MATTER #2**

### **Amend Meeting Minutes – February 24, 2015**

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#### **Summary of Matter Discussed :**

- It was noted that an amendment of the Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2015 needs to be voted as there was an extra zero in the Library budget amount. A motion was made to amend the February 24, 2015 Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded and all were in favor

#### **Documents or Exhibits for this Matter:**

- Appropriations Committee Meeting Minutes – February 24, 2015

#### **Votes Taken Under this Matter :**

- A motion was made to amend the February 24, 2015 Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded and all were in favor

## **TOPIC / MATTER #3**

### **Review FY16 Budgets**

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#### **Summary of Matter Discussed :**

- The Chairman spoke about the School Budget with the Unit A collective bargaining agreement. Discussion followed about the percentages of the School Department, Fire and Police Department's pay structures.
- A motion was made that after seeing the particulars; that we remove the contingencies from our approval (*of the vote taken for the School Budget*). The motion was seconded with the caveat that the Chairman explain to the School Committee how difficult it was to accomplish because we still don't feel comfortable with the way that they're putting an additional financial burden on the Town each year that grows faster than general government. And, therefore, in our opinion, that they are essentially absorbing a very large share of the resources that are available to Town to the detriment of the other things that people on this committee feel are also important. The Chairman stated that their dissatisfaction has already been stated, but he has no problem to reiterate it. Discussion followed about how all the departments have been impacted. The vote was four in favor and three opposed.
- Discussion followed about contract negotiations. The Town Accountant gave an update of the current status of the 3 larger contract negotiations. The Committee spoke about their general dissatisfaction with the School Department's collective bargaining.
- The Town Accountant gave a description about fringe benefits being added to the ELCAT FY16 Budget. Discussion followed about allocating costs to budgets and also about the "Cadillac Tax" associated with costlier insurance plans.
- The Town Accountant explained that she had changed the ELCAT Revolving fund amount to \$180,000 to reflect the addition of the fringe amount.
- A motion was made to approve the revised ELCAT budget of \$179,298.86. The motion was seconded and all were in favor.
- The Town Administrator joined the meeting to speak about a reserve fund transfer. He stated that if the Charter Commission ballot question passed then a \$5,000.00 reserve fund transfer would have to be made to cover expenses. He explained different funding scenarios and added that the Board of Selectmen chose the "project approach" to set the account up; similar to how funding for capital projects is handled.

- The Town Administrator asked the Committee about their preference for the health insurance warrant articles. The Chairman stated that the Committee favors option A, but would lend support to any of the three options.

**Documents or Exhibits for this Matter:**

- FY16 ELCAT Budget Request

**Votes Taken Under this Matter :**

- A motion was made to remove the contingencies from the vote taken for the School Budget. The motion was seconded. Discussion followed. The vote was four in favor and three opposed.
- A motion was made to approve the revised ELCAT budget of \$179,298.86. The motion was seconded and all were in favor.

**7:47 PM: Motion to Adjourn**

**Next Meeting: April 21, 2015 – 6:30PM – High School – Auditorium**

<b>MEETING FOLLOW UP:</b>
<b>PRIOR MEETING NOTES:</b>
Note: Set date for Auditor's budget forum
<b>Committee Goals :</b>
Health Insurance Plan Designs
Health Insurance for part-time Elected Officials
Meal Tax generation
Professional Development Class
Increase OPEB Appropriation
Establish a Capital Planning Budget
Note: Present Fringe costs in next budget cycle.